

Appl. No. 09/512,629
Amdt. Dated February 12, 2004
Reply to Office action of: January 14, 2004
Attorney Docket No. P12297-US1
EUS/J/P/04-1029

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Amendments

Claims 1, 3-13 and 15-30 were pending in the application prior to this response. The Applicants have now cancelled claims 1 and 3-8. Accordingly, claims 9-13 and 15-30 remain pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 9-13 and 15-30.

3.) Claim Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 3-8, under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite; claims 1 and 7 as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. JP 10-65648 issued to Sano; claims 3-6 as being unpatentable over Sano (JP 10-65648) in view of Noll Barreto, *et al.* (US 6,223,048); and claim 8 as being unpatentable over Sano in view of Haartsen (US 6,009,332). In view of the cancellation of those claims, the Examiner's rejection is moot; the Applicants intend to file a divisional application to continue the prosecution of those claims.

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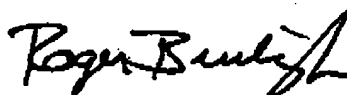
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 9-13 and 15-30.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger S. Burleigh
Registration No. 40,542
Ericsson Patent Counsel

Ericsson Inc.
6300 Legacy Drive
M/S EVW 2-C-2
Plano, TX 75024
Phone: 972-583-5799
Fax: 972-583-7864
roger.burleigh@ericsson.com

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